(d) if so, whether Government will recommend that BSNL be awarded ILD licence forthwith; and

(e) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) Disinvestment in Public Sector Undertaking is a continuous process. As a part of the process, Government keeps considering proposals for disinvestment in various public sector enterprises from time to time. The proposals are considered through Inter-Ministerial consultations and final decisions are taken. No decision has been taken in respect of strategic sale in BSNL.

(c) The privatisation of VSNL has been done in pursuance of the Government policy. In this regard, VSNL was granted NLD license in lieu of preponement of its demonopolisation by two years. Both the NLD and ILD services have been opened up to bring in competition for better services and benefit to customers. So far, three companies apart from VSNL have been given ILD licenses and three companies apart from BSNL have the license for NLD services. Valuation of BSNL would depend on several factors and, therefore, it is not feasible to assess the impact of any single factor in isolation.

(d) and (e) The application of BSNL for ILD licence, if received, shall be considered by the Government in accordance with its licensing policy.

Disinvestment in oil companies

2219. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY:
SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are planning to disinvest the oil companies;

(b) the names of companies and Government's plan in regard thereto and by when it is likely to be taken up;

(c) the total stake which is likely to be downloaded;

(d) whether it is also a fact that blue chip/profit making units are also being considered for such disinvestment; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (e) Disinvestment in Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) is a continuous process. As a part of the process, Government keeps considering proposals for disinvestment in various PSUs including oil PSUs from time to time. As on date, Government has decided to disinvest 51 per cent of the equity of Engineers India Limited (EIL) through strategic sale and 10 per cent of the equity of EIL to the employees of EIL. The Government has also decided 'in principle' to disinvest a part of the equity held by it in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) through strategic sale.

The decision to disinvest in a particular Public Sector Undertaking is taken in terms of the declared disinvestment policy of the Government. According to it, in generality of the cases, Government will bring down its equity to 26 per cent or below in all non-strategic Central Public Sector Undertakings. The strategic public sector enterprises are those in the areas of arms and ammunitions and the allied items of defence equipments, etc.; atomic energy except in the areas relating to generation of nuclear power and applications of radiation, radio isotopes to agriculture, medicine in non-strategic industries and railway transport. This policy covers all Central Public Undertakings—whether they are making profits or losses.

Disinvestment of Bharat Wagon Engineering Company Limited in Bihar

†2220. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.